

Those who know Your name will place their trust in You always, because You never forsake those who seek You and seek Your ways. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

THANKING INTERNATIONAL REPUBLICAN INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCING THE MARCH OF FREEDOM

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, one of my life goals in public service has been to promote democracy and freedom throughout the world. A leading proponent of this goal is the International Republican Institute, widely revered as IRI. Founded in 1983, this visionary nonprofit organization responded to President Ronald Reagan's call in 1982 that "we must be staunch in our conviction that freedom is not the sole prerogative of a lucky few, but the inalienable and universal right of all human beings."

IRI has advanced the march of freedom by teaching nations recovering from Communist and authoritarian totalitarian regimes how to self-govern through the rule of law. IRI adheres to the fundamental American principles of individual freedom, equal opportunity, and entrepreneurial spirit that foster economic development.

I have seen IRI's success firsthand in Bulgaria, as I joined a delegation to observe their first free elections since victory in the Cold War. They have democracy efforts in 56 countries, including Iraq, Afghanistan, China, Slovakia, and Russia.

I want to personally thank IRI's president, George A. Folsom, for his commitment to bringing the hope of freedom to people all over the world.

In conclusion, may God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.

THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION IS OUTSOURCING RESPONSIBILITIES RELATING TO JOBS AND THE ECONOMY

(Mr. McDERMOTT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, when it comes to jobs and the economy, this administration has outsourced its responsibility.

The Department of Labor has just given us proof. February unemployment figures are grim and include a stunning revelation: the private sector actually lost jobs last month. The meager 21,000 jobs, new jobs, all came from local and State government. This is not economic recovery; it is an economic crisis. Long-term unemployment is at its highest level in 20 years. The unemployment rate among teens is a staggering 37 percent. The Community Service Society says in some cities the unemployment rate among black men is 50 percent.

The administration has turned its back on average Americans. We must pass extended unemployment benefits. An administration that does not care about the average American is an administration that has outsourced its leadership. It has gone somewhere. We need to get it back.

ECONOMIC JOBS AND GROWTH PLAN IS WORKING FOR AMERICANS

(Mr. WELLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, we have some great challenges before our country in today's world; and one of them, of course, is moving our economy forward.

I am pleased to report to the House that the Economic Jobs and Growth Plan that was signed into law by President Bush in May of last year is working. We have seen some real benefits as a result of that Jobs and Economic Growth Plan, plans that cut taxes for every American, eliminated the marriage tax penalty, doubled the child tax credit, and also provided incentives for investment.

As a result of the President's plan that was passed into law by this Congress, we have seen a generation of well over 300,000 new jobs just in the last few months. I would also report that as a result of the bonus depreciation, the extra 50 percent that businesses can use for deducting the cost of buying a company car or an office computer or telecommunications equipment, a machine tool that, as a result of that bonus depreciation, we have now seen the highest level ever of investment by the private sector, by business, and capital assets, cars and trucks, machine tools, computers. When we encourage a business to buy a new com-

pany car, to buy a machine tool, to buy telecommunications equipment, to buy other types of equipment, that creates jobs.

The President's plan is working.

STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN WEEK

(Ms. NORTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I am wearing a Liz Claiborne, very attractive, very glamorous scarf which is being used and is being handed out to Members of Congress, especially women Members of Congress this week, as we call attention to Violence Against Women and Stop Violence Against Women Week. The bipartisan Women's Caucus and the Hispanic Caucus are kicking off this event this week with a reception later on.

The point is to wear something beautiful in order to draw attention to a very ugly phenomenon in our country and around the world, and that is violence against women, very closely related to child abuse. One way to stop child abuse is to focus more on violence against women themselves. We have a bill, the Violence Against Women Act, of course, which means that Congress itself regards this as a major phenomenon in our society.

Mr. Speaker, let us use this entire week to call attention to it and to eliminate it once and for all from the United States of America and from the world.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 8, 2004.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, I have the honor to transmit a sealed envelope received from the White House on March 8, 2004 at 3:15 p.m. and said to contain a message from the President whereby he submits a report on implementation of PL 107-228 concerning Russian Debt Reduction for Nonproliferation.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

JEFF TRANDAHL,
Clerk of the House.

REPORT TO THE CONGRESS ON AUTHORITY FOR RUSSIAN FEDERATION DEBT REDUCTION FOR NONPROLIFERATION—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 108-171)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message

from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on International Relations and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Consistent with section 1321 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Year 2003 (Public Law 107-228), I transmit herewith a report prepared by my Administration on implementation of the debt reduction authority conferred by title XIII, subtitle B of Public Law 107-228.

GEORGE W. BUSH,
THE WHITE HOUSE, March 8, 2004.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE
CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 8, 2004.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, I have the honor to transmit a sealed envelope received from the White House on March 8, 2004 at 11:55 a.m. and said to contain a message from the President whereby he notifies the Congress of his intention to enter into a free trade agreement with the Kingdom of Morocco.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

JEFF TRANDAH,
Clerk of the House.

INTENTION TO ENTER INTO FREE
TRADE AGREEMENT WITH THE
KINGDOM OF MOROCCO—MES-
SAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF
THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC.
NO. 108-172)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, without objection, referred to the Committee on Ways and Means and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Consistent with section 2105(a)(1)(A) of the Trade Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-210; the "Trade Act"), I am pleased to notify the Congress of my intent to enter into a free trade agreement (FTA) with the Kingdom of Morocco.

This agreement will create new opportunities for America's workers, farmers, businesses, and consumers by eliminating barriers in trade with Morocco. Morocco is one of the United States strongest friends in the Middle East. Increased trade will benefit Americans and help strengthen a tolerant, open, and more prosperous Morocco. Entering into an FTA with Morocco will not only strengthen our bilateral ties with this important ally, it

will also advance my goal of a Middle East free trade area (MEFTA) within a decade.

Consistent with the Trade Act, I am sending this notification at least 90 days in advance of signing the United States-Morocco FTA. My Administration looks forward to working with the Congress in developing appropriate legislation to approve and implement this free trade agreement.

GEORGE W. BUSH,
THE WHITE HOUSE, March 8, 2004.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken at 6:30 p.m. today.

SENSE OF THE HOUSE WITH RE-
SPECT TO SAN LUIS OBISPO
COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, DECEM-
BER 22, 2003 EARTHQUAKE

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 519) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives with respect to the earthquake that occurred in San Luis Obispo County, California, on December 22, 2003.

The Clerk read as follows:
H. RES. 519

Whereas at 11:15 A.M. on Monday, December 22, 2003, an earthquake measuring 6.5 on the Richter Scale occurred in San Luis Obispo County, California, with an epicenter approximately 6 miles northeast of the community of San Simeon and 24 miles northwest of the City of Paso Robles;

Whereas the magnitude of the earthquake was such that it was felt from the City of San Francisco to the Los Angeles Basin, and may have caused the Coastal Range to become up to a foot higher;

Whereas the earthquake caused damage to homes, businesses, and public infrastructure such as buildings, bridges, and roads, that will cost millions of dollars to repair;

Whereas tragically, 2 lives were lost and more than 40 persons sustained injuries;

Whereas local public safety and law enforcement personnel responded immediately, effectively, and courageously to assist victims of the earthquake and otherwise protect the public; and

Whereas a Federal disaster declaration was issued on January 13, 2004: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) is saddened by the loss of life and property caused by the earthquake that occurred in San Luis Obispo County, California, on December 22, 2003, and sends its deepest condolences to the victims and their families; and

(2) recognizes and honors those local officials, public safety and law enforcement personnel, and individuals, who in private or public capacity provided assistance to the victims of the earthquake and their families,

and commends this dedicated service to the residents of San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties and the State of California.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS) and the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 519, introduced by the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS), honors the victims and affected residents of the earthquake that occurred in San Luis Obispo, California, on December 22, 2003. The earthquake registered a 6.5 on the Richter scale, and it killed two people and injured 50 others. This was the largest quake to hit the counties of San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara since 1994.

The historic town of Paso Robles was hit the hardest. Many of the buildings in that area were unreinforced masonry structures built over a century ago, and they were unfortunately no match for the earthquake's power. The two deaths occurred in Paso Robles. In addition, the earthquake's tremors were felt in San Francisco to Los Angeles, and more than 30 aftershocks were reported in the following hours. The quake knocked out power to approximately 75,000 residents, and many others were forced to evacuate. This resolution remembers the victims and those who were injured and underscores the heroic sacrifices made by countless disaster relief workers and emergency personnel after the earthquake.

Following the wildfires that scorched hundreds of thousands of acres in October, the December 22 earthquake concluded a difficult fall season for so many California residents. Therefore, I thank the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS) for introducing this resolution. It helps us all remember the victims of this disaster.

The resolution also appropriately recognizes the public safety officials and emergency response personnel who helped limit the earthquake's effects on the region. Many individuals, businesses, and organizations in surrounding areas provided much-needed assistance to victims in the days and the weeks following the tragedy. I commend the gentleman from California for the resolution's important focus in